young rabbits in this nest when the last egg was still hatching. Storage of rabbits in the nest before hatching is common in our study area (J. Ortego unpubl. data), and I have never noticed such a large number of rabbits in a sample of 36 nests. These data suggest that the pair involved could be living in a high quality territory that yields relatively large numbers of available prey of high-energetic value, consequently minimizing the costs of a multiple brooding (Verhulst 1998, *Funct. Ecol.* 12:132–140).

Martínez et al. (2003) offered two alternative explanations that could explain the apparent double-brooding observations in southwestern Spain. Death of the female could have allowed the male to pair with another female physiologically ready to start the reproduction, or the male could have been polygynous (Bull and Henjum 1990), as has been observed in other raptors responding to a superabundant food supply (Korpimäki 1988b, *Oecologia* 77. 278–285; Marti 1992, *Condor* 92:261–263). The latter explanation, polygyny, would be an usual breeding behavior in the eagle-owl (Dalbeck et al. 1998, *Vögelwelt* 119:331–344). Neither the pair reported by Martínez et al. (2003), nor the pair reported here were marked, so it was not possible to conclude if a lone pair was involved, or if a replacement, or if two females were involved in these cases of double-brooding. Nevertheless, all proposed explanations are likely related to the effects of high prey availability on the reproductive behavior of eagle-owls, which can reduce reproductive costs and lead to multiple breeding attempts. Such conditions in Spain seem to be infrequent, especially after the recent population crash of rabbits (Villafuerte et al. 1995, *Mammalia* 59:651–659; Martínez and Calvo 2001, *J Raptor Res.* 35:259–262; Martínez and Zuberogoitia 2001, *J. Ornithol.* 142:204–211). However, intensive research in high-prey situations, such as reported here may provide further examples of double brooding that could be more common than previously thought (Marks and Perkins 1999; Mahony et al. 2001).

Consejería de Agricultura y Medio Ambiente de Castilla-La Mancha provided the permits for monitoring eagle-owl nests. I wish to thank Mario Díaz for idiomatic and editorial advice and José Arcadio Calvo for helping during field work.—**Joaquín Ortego (e-mail address: joaquinortego10@latinmail.com), Departamento de Ciencias Ambientales, Facultad de Ciencias del Medio Ambiente, Universidad de Castilla-La Mancha, Avda, Carlos III s/n, 45071 Toledo, Spain.**

Received 4 February 2004; accepted 9 August 2004
Associate Editor: Juan José Negro

J Raptor Res. 38(4):379–380

INSECT HAWKING OBSERVED IN THE LONG-EARED OWL (*ASIO OTUS*)

The Long-eared Owl (*Asio otus*) has been described as a specialist on a relatively narrow range of species of small mammals (Errington 1932, *Condor* 34:176–186; Craighead and Craighead 1979, Hawks, owls, and wildlife. Stackpole Co., Harrisburg, PA U.S.A; Marks and Marks 1981, *Murrelet* 62:80–82), and highly dependent on *Microtus* spp in many parts of North America and Europe (Marks 1984, *Can. J. Zool.* 62:1528–1533; Marks and Marti 1984, *Ornis Scand.* 15:135–143). *Asio otus* has also been found to shift dietary preference seasonally among different *Microtus* spp. in southern Sweden and among other small mammals in central Slovenia (Nilsson 1981, *Ornis Scand.* 12:216–223, Tome 2003, *Ornis Fenn.* 80:63–70).

Invertebrates are a minor component of this species' diet (0.5–0.2% by number, <0.1% by mass; Marti 1974, *Condor* 76:45–61; Marti 1976, *Condor* 78:331–336; Tome 1994, *J. Raptor Res.* 28:253–258; Alivizatos and Goutner 1999, *J. Raptor Res.* 33:160–163) as are larger prey, such as juvenile (100–150 g) lagomorphs (0.75% by number, 2.5% by biomass, Marks 1984).

Foraging behavior among Long-eared Owls is less understood than diet. The long-pointed wings and relatively low-wing loading of Long-eared Owls suggests the ability to hunt aerially, which has been observed in the form of quartering the ground for prey. Such adaptations are similar to Caprimulgids such as the Common Nighthawk (*Chordeiles minor*) which "hawk" prey aerially (catching prey on the wing; Poulin et al. 1996, Common Nighthawk (*Chordeiles minor*), *In* A. Poole and F. Gill [EDS.], The birds of North America, No. 213. The Birds of North America, Inc., Philadelphia, PA U.S.A.). In the Long-eared Owl, hawking behavior has never been documented (Marks et al 1994, Long-eared Owl (*Asio otus*), *In* A. Poole and F. Gill [EDS.], The birds of North America, No. 133. The Birds of North America, Inc., Philadelphia, PA U.S.A.). There are very few published observations of Long-eared Owl foraging

behavior, as this species is strictly nocturnal and difficult to observe. Glue and Hammond (1974, *Br. Birds* 67:361–369) report Long-eared Owls "hovering" seconds before making a kill of a small mammal, but not otherwise. During nocturnal owl and bat surveys, we were frequently able to observe the behavior of several owl species. Here, we report observations of a hovering/hawking approach to aerial feeding by a Long-eared Owl, not previously reported in this species.

Observations took place in the boreal forest of northern Ontario, Canada, south of the municipality of Ear Falls. The topography of the area is highly variable, with many lakes, and is dominated by stands of black spruce (*Picea mariana*) and to a lesser extent jack pine (*Pinus banksiana*).

On 25 June 2001, between 2220–2240 H, we first observed a Long-eared Owl perched on an aspen tree (*Populus tremuloides*) on the roadside. We confirmed the owl's identification with a flashlight and a pair of binoculars. We were able to approach the bird three times to within 10 m as it perched on various trees. As we tried to find the bird a fourth time, it flew out from the side of the road and began to hover, slowly sweeping back and forth across the road ca 2 m off the ground within 5 m of our vehicle. In the headlights, we were able to observe the owl as it "hawked" moths over a large water puddle in the middle of the road. The moths were large enough to be clearly visible (ca 5.7–6.3 cm wingspan), and were later confirmed to be moths of the genus *Actius* or *Smerinthus* (Ross 1873, The butterflies and moths of Canada. Rowsell and Hutchison, Toronto, Canada), which had previously been observed in the area. While we watched, the owl captured at least three moths, which were apparently consumed whole. The owl then flew back into the woods in the direction from which it came, and was not seen again that night.

Comments on this observation from M.C. Drever and T.D. Nudds were greatly appreciated. We wish to thank the Sustainable Forest Management Network of Centres of Excellence and The University of Guelph for funding, and for cooperation from Weyerhaeuser Inc., all of whom contributed to our presence in the field during the summer of 2001.—**Darren J.H. Sleep (e-mail address: dsleep@uoguelph.ca) and Rowan D.H. Barrett, Department of Organismal Biology, Ecology and Evolution, University of Guelph, Guelph, Ontario N1G 2W1, Canada.**

Received 27 December 2003; accepted 19 July 2004
Associate Editor: Ian G. Warkentin

J Raptor Res. 38(4):380–381

OSPREY SCAVENGES COMMON MURRE CARCASS IN COASTAL WASHINGTON

Ospreys (*Pandion haliaetus*) feed almost exclusively on fish (Poole et al. 2002, *In* A. Poole and F. Gill [EDS.], The birds of North America, No. 683. The Birds of North America, Inc., Philadelphia, PA U.S.A.). They rarely capture non-fish items or scavenge non-fish carcasses. Poole et al. (2002) provided no records of Ospreys scavenging bird carcasses.

On 9 September 2002, I observed an Osprey in immature plumage scavenging a Common Murre (*Uria aalge*) carcass on northern Grayland Beach, Grays Harbor County, WA. The carcass was one of >15 on the beach during my visit. Grayland Beach is a relatively flat, sandy beach situated between the mouths of Grays Harbor and Willapa Bay on Washington's outer coast. At 1304 H, I saw an Osprey on the beach; it faced south and used its bill to twice tear at the flesh of a carcass that I later identified as a Common Murre. The Osprey then turned, apparently saw me (ca. 100 m away), and flew south and out of view. I approached the carcass, which lay on its back, and noted the pectoralis muscles were exposed and had been partially removed. I did not see the Osprey again, but at 1314 H saw another Osprey fly over heading south above the beach.

It is possible that the Osprey I observed was merely investigating an unusual item, a behavior that has been noted in post-fledging juveniles (L. Gilson pers. comm.), and that scavenging was not its initial intent. However, it seems reasonable that most scavenging is preceded by investigation, particularly in juveniles. Consequently, regardless of the original intent, the outcome was that the Osprey extracted flesh from the carcass of a dead bird.

Although Ospreys rarely capture or consume non-fish prey, Wiley and Lohrer (1973, *Wilson Bull.* 85:468–470) identified a number of factors to explain the occasional use of non-fish food. Among these factors were: (1) the presence of easily-captured prey and (2) an abundant alternate food source. The coastal beaches of Washington often have abundant dead birds (e.g., Northern Fulmar [*Fulmarus glacialis*], scoters [*Melanitta* spp.], gulls [*Larus*